

TWENTY-SEVENTH

ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

PHILADELPHIA

Female Anti-Slavery Society.

PHILADELPHIA:

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1861.

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REPORT.

The revolution through which this nation has been passing during the last twenty-five years, has culminated in the dissolution of the American Union. Six of our thirty-three States have repudiated their allegiance to the Federal government, and asserted their independent sovereignty. Half the nation stands appalled at the sudden catastrophe, and statesmen and politicians anxiously inquire into its causes, and seek for a new bond to re-unite the parted members of our confederacy. To the Abolitionists, who have been watching the steady progress of this revolution, this catastrophe does not seem so sudden. During the last thirty years they have been striving to awaken an anti-slavery sentiment and principle in the heart of the North. They have endeavored to do this by those means by which moral reforms are always accomplished; by arguments addressed to the reason, the conscience and the heart. And as they have pursued their work, they have, from time to time, confidently predicted that nothing but the abolition of American Slavery would be able to avert the dissolution of this Union. They clearly foresaw that the growing anti-slavery sentiment of the North would attain such strength that it would resist the aggres-

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sions of the Slave power, and that a collision between the Free States and the Slaveholding States would be inevitable.

The history of the Anti-Slavery enterprise has given to the world another demonstration of the power of Truth. When this enterprise was commenced, this nation turned, in contemptuous silence, from the prophet-call which summoned it to repentance, or answered that summons with derisive laughter. Proud in its conscious strength—strength of wealth, of broad territory—strength of intellect, of culture—strength of social ties and ecclesiastical interests, ramifying the whole structure of its society—strength of its two great political parties—it smiled at the impotence which assailed a mighty institution, secure in its great protection. Only one of its sovereign States descried in this humble movement the germ of a national revolution; and with the instinctive sagacity which sense of danger awakens, attempted to stretch the right arm of her power from the Gulf of Mexico to Massachusetts Bay, and quench the new altar-fire of Liberty in the blood of the man who had kindled it. Nor did the almost universal contempt with which the nation regarded this new enterprise seem unreasonable to those who measure and compare forces by the ordinary standards of the world. Only they who, seeing the invisible, know the omnipotence of Truth, can understand the warfare in which one chases a thousand, and two put ten thousand to flight. Sustained by faith in the immortal power of Truth, the Aboli-

tionists pursued their labor, unappalled by the greatness of the task before them, and little heeding the scorn or the violence which assailed them. They knew that the success of their enterprise was a question only of time. The nation that slumbered awoke; the nation that, at first, derided, and soon marshalled in hot haste all its forces, political, ecclesiastical and social, against the few fanatics who disturbed its peace, now stands trembling before that mighty power, whose presence it acknowledges but cannot comprehend. The prediction which it accounted as the raving of insanity is to-day fulfilled. The proud nation who glorified herself, and said in her heart, "I sit a queen, and shall see no sorrow;" who said in her strength, "Who is the Lord, that I should obey His voice?" is dismembered. Another lesson has been given to teach the world that ideas cannot be conquered by physical force, and that the power of Truth over the human soul is invincible.

A review of the events of the past year shows a steady growth of consciousness of strength in the North, and a determination not to surrender all its rights to the Slave Power.

The final success of the long struggle to obtain the admission of Kansas into the Union; the defeat of the United States Government in the Ottawa Rescue cases, in Illinois, which defeat was accomplished by a spirit of freedom in the juries; the resistance of the *people* of Wisconsin against the aggressions of the Federal authorities, in the Booth case, even when the

State government weakly faltered in defence of its rights ; the judicial decisions in the Lemmon case ; and the course thus far pursued by our own Legislature, during its present session, are among such indications. The re-election of Alexander Henry to the Mayoralty of this city was an unequivocal expression of the determination of our citizens to maintain their own freedom of speech ; for the right to exercise such freedom, and the duty of the magistrate to protect it, was the issue between the parties in that election. The success of the Republican Party in our last gubernatorial election, is significant of a growing love of freedom in the hearts of the people. Although the Tariff question was involved in this contest, and the interests of trade controlled the votes of certain classes in the city of Philadelphia and some other parts of the State, undoubtedly the masses of the people, especially in the agricultural districts, confidently *believed* that, in voting for Andrew G. Curtin, they were voting in favor of Liberty and against Slavery. In view of this fact, the unprecedented majority of thirty-two thousand votes, by which he was elected, is a cheering sign of the times.

But the most signal expression of the anti-slavery sentiment pervading the North, was that which was seen and heard and felt, from one end of the land to the other, in the election of Abraham Lincoln to the Presidency of the United States. The issue taken in this contest by the Republican party against the Slave power was, that slavery should not be extended

into the Territories, and that party carefully disclaimed any intention of interfering with the existence of the system in the States. But the slave power, with its sagacious instincts, felt that *every* blow struck against tyranny, proves at last a mortal blow, and, through the campaign, fought as for its life. Besides, its keen vision saw that far down in the hearts of the Northern *people*, deeper than party love for the Union, stronger than the foundations of party platforms, lay an anti-slavery sentiment which at no distant day would be developed into an anti-slavery principle, and which would demand no less, and take no less, as the price of Union, than the abolition of the whole system of American Slavery. The slaveholders and the Abolitionists saw in the result of this election, only the confirmation of this fact. As such, we hailed it as tidings of great joy; as such, they cursed it as the utterance of their doom.

During the past year, there has come up to us, from nearly all the Southern States, continued evidence that a Reign of Terror prevails there, which could never exist in a community where there was any sense of security or ease of conscience in the dominant party. Where men are whipped to death for an expression of opinion that slavery is wrong; sentenced to be hanged for circulating the *New York Tribune*; imprisoned, tortured, hanged, for uttering disapproval of an existing institution, or on the suspicion of such utterance, there rulers and ruled are, alike, slaves. From a community where such scenes

transpire, we *anticipate* the graphic pictures which are sent to us of panic-stricken slaveholders "sleeping on their arms at night, doubly bolting and barring their doors;" "watching their sleeping children, to guard them from the vengeance" of their slaves, the victims of their own oppression. Nor are we surprised when a government which connives at the perpetration of these lawless outrages, itself violates its own fundamental principles, and establishes a "Senatorial Inquisition" which disregards Constitution and law, and the just principles of individual freedom. The retribution of justice faileth never. A people who fasten chains around the weak and helpless, will find some of the links of those chains slowly and surely coiling around themselves.

The operations of this Society during the past year, have been similar to those of preceding years. Our funds are devoted to the dissemination of anti-slavery doctrines; directly, by the circulation of the National Anti-Slavery Standard, and other anti-slavery journals and tracts; and indirectly, by appropriations to the Pennsylvania and the American Anti-Slavery Societies. One of the newspapers, to the support of which we have contributed, is "The Free South," published by William S. Bailey, in Newport, Kentucky. Through most indefatigable labor, and much personal peril to himself and his family, this brave man has steadily persisted in the publication of his paper, in spite of the repeated attempts of illegal and legal tyranny to silence its testimony against slavery

in Kentucky. Since the destruction of his printing office, by a mob, mentioned in our last Annual Report, he has re-established the paper, for which act he was arrested on a charge of incendiarism, and imprisoned; the magistrate before whom he was tried having been one of the mob who destroyed his press. He was soon set at liberty by a writ of *habeas corpus*, and continues to be a terror to evil doers.

Our Society has sent memorials to our State Legislature, asking them to enact such laws as may be necessary for the protection of all persons within this Commonwealth, who have not forfeited, by crime, the right to liberty. This petition is obviously based on simple justice, which evidently demands that when the majority of a people maintain a government which, for the preservation of the public peace, requires the individual to substitute an appeal to the laws, for the exercise of his natural right of self-defence, such government shall protect the individual in his inalienable right to life and liberty; and the fact that our Legislature or our people should hesitate to grant it, is an indication of the deep moral corruption which American Slavery has wrought in Pennsylvania; partially destroying the vision which distinguishes between absolute LAW, *always based on justice*, and the statutes of falsehood and wrong, to which no human soul owes allegiance; and to a still greater extent destroying that supreme love of Right, which enables an individual or a nation to follow it with fearless trust.

The very great success of our recent Fair, was of a

kind which cannot be exhibited in our Treasurer's Report. Its pecuniary results were equal to all reasonable expectation in that period of commercial embarrassment, but this aspect, usually so important, was, for a time, forgotten in the far greater interests which it involved. Once more the abolitionists were called to stand for the defence of the people's right of freedom of speech and of peaceful assemblage, and, at any cost of personal peril to themselves, to maintain that right, not for themselves alone, but for the populace, who, in the blind madness of the hour, were eager to strike a mortal blow at their own most precious liberties. The anticipation of the dissolution of the Union, an event, then, more darkly foreshadowed by every passing hour, had stricken with fear the trading cities of the North. Our Fair happened to occur at the critical moment between the first recoil of terror, and the reaction of northern pride of independence. Its suppression by violence was naturally regarded, by a portion of our citizens, as a suitable peace-offering to the South. We were not surprised by the information which, from time to time, reached us, that those classes of our fellow-citizens who compose or inspire our mobs, had decreed that the Anti-Slavery Fair should not be held. Abolitionists, who, during more than a quarter of a century, had tested the power of mobs, of civil governments, and of churches, to stay the progress of an idea, to suppress truth, to annihilate freedom of thought and speech, were not likely to be moved from their purpose or

their equanimity, by such demonstrations of hostility. Aware that the responsibility of failing to exercise our right of peaceful assemblage for lawful purposes, could rest upon us only in the event of our voluntarily relinquishing this right, we pursued our usual course, unmoved, leaving such responsibility to those who might choose to assume it. But the weapons formed against us, upon that occasion, certainly did not prosper. The men who were brave enough to threaten, and doubtless, brave enough to attack a Ladies' Bazaar, had the fear of our Mayor and his police before their eyes, and discovering that that magistrate entertained views of his official duty, somewhat differing from their own, they wisely concluded to leave the ladies in possession of their saloons.

The maintenance of our right thus to assemble, we account the chief success of our Fair of 1860. Another result, which we highly estimate, is the discipline which the experience of that week furnished for our young recruits, who have enlisted under our banners too recently to know, except as matters of history, the early struggles of our cause, in which their predecessors were trained for this warfare.

But the retrospect of the year shows, also, some other signs of the times than those which indicate the moral advancement of a people ; and which assure us that the final victory of Freedom is not to be won without stern conflict. The efforts of Southern States to enslave their free colored population ; the revival of the foreign slave-trade, in open defiance of the law ;

the facility and frequency with which slave ships are fitted out, and sent from the port of New York; the violence with which Freedom of Speech has been assailed in northern towns and cities, by brutal mobs, doing the bidding of their southern masters; the virulent and persistent hostility to the anti-slavery enterprise manifested by the great ecclesiastical bodies of this country, which has naturally resulted in the suppression of freedom of speech in the Protestant Episcopal Convention; in the increase of slave-holding Presbyteries, in the New School Presbyterian Church, from the number of three to twenty, in the course of its twenty-four years' existence; and in such blindness of eye and hardness of heart, among prominent clergymen of Philadelphia, that they dared to proclaim, from what they call christian pulpits, on the recent National Fast-Day, the doctrine that he who robs his brother of his inalienable rights, sunders the holiest ties of affection, and makes one man the helpless victim of another's irresponsible despotism; he who clutches the trembling woman, child, or man, escaping from such despotism, and thrusts him back into it, *doeth God service*; these things, and such as these, are tokens that American history, to-day, is realizing and fulfilling the Apocalyptic vision and prophecy, "Wo to the inhabitants of the earth and sea! for the devil has come down unto you, having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time."

Among the developements of these times which so

sternly try men's souls, there is none more sad than the treachery and moral weakness of statesmen, who, before their hour of trial came, professed loyalty to Freedom. When great souls lock themselves so closely in fraternal embrace with worshippers in the House of Rimmon, that they *involuntarily* bow before the altars of its idol, plaintively crying out, in the intervals of that worship, "Pardon thy servant in this thing!" who shall wonder that politicians of smaller stature hasten to lay their pettier offerings on the same shrine. The pusillanimous resolves of Philadelphia Union Meetings, which disgrace our Independence Square, sacred to Freedom by all historic memories; the recommendations of our departing and incoming Governors, that the few defences which Pennsylvania has set around the liberty of the most defenceless class of the American people, shall be destroyed, in order to appease South Carolina and her confederates, are but echoes of a voice which comes to us from our national senate; a voice whose tones we scarcely recognize, so utterly changed are they since they were borne to us by the winds from our western prairies. We do not mourn the destruction of a Union, which has cost the North, not gold or blood, but the moral strength, the real manliness, the true nobility, of her sons.

The facilities which the Fugitive Slave Statute of 1850, furnishes for kidnapping under the forms of law, and the encouragement derived from it by those who would commit the same outrage without those

forms, have been illustrated in several instances in Pennsylvania, during the past year. In August last, a free man, named James Valentine, who had been a resident of this city for twenty-four years, was captured in open day, at Fifth and Market streets, by two U. S. Marshals, who, in company with three slave-hunters from the District of Columbia, were seeking a fugitive who, they said, had escaped from Joshua Bakeman, of Georgetown. Suddenly seized and manacled, and dragged, with pinioned hands and rent garments, to the Marshal's office, he demanded the reason of the assault. Fortunately, a crowd of sympathizing spectators had followed him, several of whom testified to his freedom, and his long residence in this city. The slave-hunters, when confronted with the outraged man, were obliged to confess that he was not the slave whom they were seeking.

Another act of similar atrocity was perpetrated in Lancaster county, in the month of March. A free man residing in Sadsbury township, was taken by four men who entered his house at night, and conveyed him into a neighboring piece of woods, where his captors tied him, placed him in a carriage, and pointing at him their pistols, ordered him to be quiet. He was carried to Baltimore and placed in jail, where he remained several days. His assurance that he was a free man rendered his jailor uneasy; and by the timely intervention of a visitor who recognized him, he was released and sent back to his home. Such scenes as these, enacted on our own soil, are sufficient

answer to the question "What has the North to do with slavery?"

We have again to record the deep disgrace of Philadelphia and Pennsylvania, in the sacrifice of another victim to the Fugitive Slave Statute. It occurred on the 28th of March, 1860. A man named Moses Horner, who was arrested near Harrisburg, and claimed as the *property* of Charles T. Butler, of Jefferson County, Virginia, was, on that day, doomed to slavery, by John Cadwallader, U. S. Dist. Judge, sitting in Philadelphia. Every effort which his counsel, Messrs. Earle, Hopper, Warriner, and Bull, and the abolitionists of this city, could make in his behalf, was promptly and zealously made, but made in vain. The admission of testimony against him, by parties interested in his conviction, was earnestly opposed by his lawyers, but was allowed by the judge. The legal defence was chiefly based on the fact that the transcript of the record of the Virginia court, offered by the claimant's counsel, in proof of authority to recover the fugitive, bore evident marks of attempts to alter the spelling of the name. When the counsel went beyond this plea, and argued for liberty on the ground of natural justice and absolute right, their argument was, as it always is in these cases, pronounced "unprofessional," "foreign to the purpose," "most unlawyerlike;" charges which are the keenest satires on our jurisprudence, though uttered by unconscious satirists.

The great city, immersed in its commerce and its poli-

tics, took little heed of the tragedy which was passing before its eyes. The closing scene of that tragedy sent despair to one human soul; awakened sympathetic grief in the hearts of abolitionists, who, impotent to save him, gave to their unhappy brother all that was theirs to give him—the tenderest pity; and roused a few brave colored men to risk their own lives in an attempt to rescue by violence the victim of legalized injustice; but Philadelphia saw not, in that poor, degraded, helpless man, the essential principle of human liberty, of man's inalienable rights, fettered and in the grasp of a despot. How could she see it? Her politicians never avert their gaze from the goal of their ambition,—power; the golden idol of her exchange holds spell-bound the eyes of her merchants; to her Judiciary and Bar, the Constitution and Statute-Book are “the end of the law for righteousness;” and her pulpit and press are the reflection and echo of all these. Here and there, a merchant who had learned that money is not the soul's true wealth, a lawyer whose anointed eyes had read a higher law than that engrossed on his parchments, a clergyman who held his commission from Heaven, and not from the pews below him, rebuked this outrage in manly tones, and warned the careless Commonwealth of the retributive justice which surely follows every blow struck against Human Freedom; but the great city's voice which should have gone up in indignant remonstrance from the press, the pulpit, and the homes of the people, was dumb that day.

In our last Report we recorded, as a hopeful sign of the times, the fact that freedom of speech for abolitionists had been protected by the civil authorities of Philadelphia. The laurels thus won by our city, she has worthily worn during the past year, excepting in one hour of temptation, when her chief magistrate connived with those who would save the Union at the expense of Liberty, and used his official influence to suppress one of the lectures of the People's Literary Institute, because it was to be delivered by George William Curtis, an orator of the Anti-Slavery Republican Party. We regret to state that those efforts were successful, and that our Mayor thus dishonored the city, and marred his own bright fame as Defender of the freedom of speech.

The growth of true christianity in this community has not yet been sufficient to rebuke, effectively, the insult which is daily offered to our colored population, in their exclusion from our city railway cars. If this exclusion is considered in the light of the practical value of the right thus withheld, it convicts a strong party of great meanness towards a weaker one; regarded from a higher point of view, it presents an illustration of the hypocrisy of a people calling themselves democratic and christian. But we are glad to record the fact that that one of these Railway Companies has amended its practice in this respect; and we trust that advancing civilization and christianity will soon banish from among us this odious manifestation of vulgar pride.

From a retrospect of the long struggle between the contending forces of Liberty and Slavery, in this nation, and from the developments of the present hour, the question arises in every thoughtful mind, What is to be predicted of our country's future? Amid the strifes of hostile political parties; the rending asunder of ecclesiastical bodies; the contest of various factions vying with one another to suppress the rising rebellion of anti-slavery thought and speech; and the upheaving of the foundations of institutions which seemed as immutable as the everlasting hills; the abolitionists have kept their eyes constantly fixed upon one result, which they knew must come, at last, through the whirlwind and storm of the conflict, *viz.* the abolition of American slavery. For this result they have steadily labored, refusing to be turned from their purpose, by any side issues, or to compromise their demand for any lower aim. We now see that this end draweth nigh. It is not to the new administration of our Federal government that we look for the inauguration of the reign of Liberty. Very efficient service in the anti-slavery cause cannot be reasonably expected of a President who avows his intention of restoring the fugitive slave to his master; who tells the nation that though he believes that Congress possesses constitutional power to abolish slavery in the District of Columbia, he should not favor their abolition of it, excepting with the consent of a large number of the slaveholders of the District; and who says that if he should be of opinion that Congress possesses the con-

stitutional power to abolish the slave-trade between the States, he should still not be in favor of the exercise of that power, unless upon some conservative principle, akin to the conditions which he suggests relative to the abolition of slavery in the District of Columbia. Nor can much more be expected from a party in power, which, when out of power, pledged itself, through its accredited organs, to enforce the compromises of our Federal Constitution. But the heart of the Northern *people* is slowly and irrevocably decreeing the doom of slavery. Their political leaders may refuse to see this fact, the representatives of their commerce may loudly deny it, but the South instinctively knows it, and *therefore* refuses to accept the peace-offerings presented to her by Northern politicians. Herein is hope for the slave. For the mortification of seeing pusillanimous party-leaders offering to sell the people's birth-right, for a mess of pottage, there is the consolation of believing that the offer will be rejected, and, ultimately, the treacherous traffickers only, be sacrificed thereby.

Whatever course the maddened South or the affrighted North may now take, one thing is certain, the abolition of slavery has been greatly hastened by the events of the last three months. If the South maintains its defiant position, and establishes an independent Confederacy, the slaves will soon settle for themselves the question of their freedom; if, fearful of this result, the revolting States return to the protection of the Federal Government, they will reunite.

themselves to a people who have occupied the period of their absence in learning new and thorough lessons in the comparative strength of the North and the South, and in unconsciously acquiring a deeper hatred of slavery, from the illustrations of its character, recently exhibited in the arrogant and despotic bearing of slaveholders.

While we hail with joy and thanksgiving the approach of the final triumph of our cause, we are aware that the work of the abolitionists is not yet done. The earnest reiteration of the principle which has guided our enterprise from the beginning, and sustained us through all its vicissitudes, *viz.* that the absolute right is always to be obeyed, and is always the highest expediency, is especially needed in this momentous national crisis. Professing to believe in natural justice and christian morality, the representatives of the nation, assembled in legislatures and conventions, are seriously deliberating in order to ascertain how much of essential right it is now expedient to sacrifice for the sake of peace, and what degree of wrong may be wisely perpetrated upon the weak and defenceless, for the advantage of the stronger party. All appliances which can be used to strengthen their confidence in the right, to deepen their hatred of injustice, to inspire them with true manly courage, are needed now. If they, who, in these conclaves, represent the North, can be convinced that the Northern heart and conscience will sustain them only in a course of honor and rectitude, the nation may yet be saved,

in the true sense of that often perverted word. Otherwise, they may re-enact the folly of their fathers, and strive to reconstruct a union between the Border Slave States, and the Free States, cementing it with the same compromises of principle that the founders of our Government made for the sake of Union, and trusting with the same mistaken faith that the slavery within their borders will soon die from inherent weakness. The voice which first awakened this nation from its profound slumber, and summoned it to repentance for the sin of enslaving men, should, surely, ring in its ears, to day, all prophet warnings, all brotherly entreaties, all faithful exhortations to heed well the golden opportunities of this hour when the angel of God's providence is offering to it a momentous alternative of good or evil, and awaiting the choice which shall exalt it in true glory before heaven and earth, or sink it in deeper infamy.

The yet unbroken chains of the slave, our country's imminent peril, the achievements of the past, and our faith in the invincible power of truth, are our incentives to continue our labors with undiminished zeal and industry. And the admonition, "Work while the day lasts," sounds in our ears, to-day, from lips which, though dead, yet speak to us in the memories of their fidelity during all the years through which, hand in hand and heart to heart with us, they shared this toil and conflict. A vacant seat, here, to-day, reminds us that the passing year has bereaved this Society of one of its members* whose loyalty and

* Evelina Supplee.

diligent service in our cause were highly appreciated, and will be long remembered. And of our fellow-laborers in Pennsylvania, two others, who, from the commencement of our enterprise, have been its faithful adherents, have finished their earthly work and passed to higher labors. And from a far-off grave, in a land struggling to achieve its liberty, there comes to us a voice whose tones are as a trumpet sounding a victory; for he who sleeps in that Italian grave, lived and died in the full and glorious faith that his country's redemption was drawing nigh. His mighty labors and burning zeal and tender sympathy for oppressed humanity, found ample recompense in this faith, when, dying, a stranger in a strange land, he relinquished his fondly cherished hope that his eyes might see this salvation, and his voice join in the jubilee song of the American slave.

Very hopefully we commence the labor of another year. Faith is turning to sight. The Spirit of Liberty has breathed on the nations of the Old World, and they are wakening into new life. Autocratic Russia, pointing to her twenty million serfs made freemen, calls to democratic America to break the fetters of her slaves. Surely, the hour is at hand when that resistless angel, at whose touch the chains of slavery fall, and before whose coming despotisms flee away, shall have accomplished his mission,

“And over Earth’s fall jubilee,
Shall deeper joy be felt in Heaven.”

Philadelphia Female Anti-Slavery Society in account with
ANNIE SHOEMAKER, Treasurer.

| 1860, | DR. | |
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| To subscription to N. A. Standard, 50 copies, | | \$100 00 |
| “ “ Liberator, 10 “ | | 25 00 |
| “ “ A. S. Bugle, 10 “ | | 15 00 |
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| “ Advertising and Printing circular, | | 6 50 |
| “ American Anti-Slavery Society, (Balance of one-half net proceeds of Fair of 1859,) | | 138 34 |
| “ Printing Annual Report in Sunday Dispatch, | | 50 00 |
| “ “ “ “ in Public Ledger, | | 48 50 |
| “ “ “ “ in usual form, | | 29 50 |
| “ Donations to Pa. A. S. Society, | | 600 00 |
| “ Freight, Duties and Portorage, | | 41 28 |
| “ Balance in Treasury, | | 335 42 |
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| 1860, | CR. | |
|--------------------------------------|-----|------------------|
| By Balance in Treasury, | | \$342 46 |
| “ Sale of articles from Fair of '59, | | 6 13 |
| “ Members' Subscriptions, | | 79 00 |
| “ Donations, | | 3 95 |
| “ Proceeds of Fair of 1860, | | 963 00 |
| | | <hr/> \$1,394 54 |

LYDIA GILLINGHAM,

Auditor.